

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment submits the changes above, and is responsive in any other manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Original Claim 1 is pending, and original Claims 2-14 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of any scope or subject matter.

Applicant respectfully informs the Office that a Supplemental Amendment containing additional claims for entry and examination in this application will be filed. If the Examiner in charge is ready to consider the present case and such additional claims have not been presented, it would be appreciated if the Examiner would inform the undersigned at the below-noted contact information.

CLAIMS FOR PRIORITY/REQUEST FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Applicant has amended the specification to include identification of the related application so as to provide identification of the prior application upon which benefit is claimed in the present case under §120. Written acknowledgment of the claim for domestic priority under 35 USC §120 is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicant claims foreign priority under §119 of JP 2000-177135 filed 8 June 2000, for which a claim for priority and certified priority document originally were submitted on 24 July 2001 in prior application Serial No. 09/875,875, upon which benefit is claimed in the present continuation under §120. Applicant respectfully requires written acknowledgment of the completion of all requirements for the claim for foreign priority under 35 USC §119 in the present continuation.

IDENTIFICATION OF ASSIGNEE

HITACHI, LTD. is Assignee of entire right, title and interest in and to the present application by virtue of the Assignment recorded 8 June 2001 at Reel 011889, Frames 0752 *et seq.*

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted throughout prosecution of the present application are without prejudice or disclaimer. That is, any above statements/amendment/cancellation (all made without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any objection/rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, *i.e.*, Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

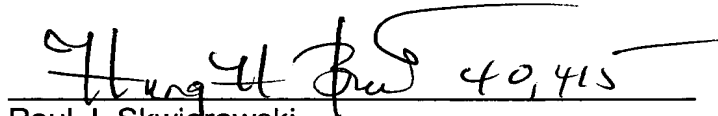
EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the local D.C. area number 703-312-6600, to discuss an Examiner's Amendment or other suggested action for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

CONCLUSION

No Petition or extension fee is possible or required for entry of this paper, and
no additional claim fee is due.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul J. Skwiderawski", is written over a horizontal line.

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